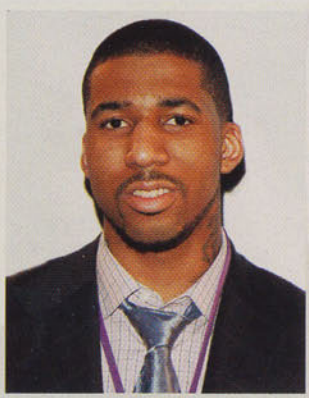
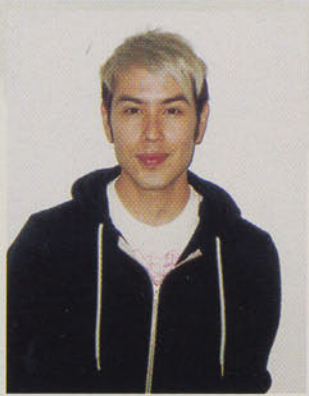
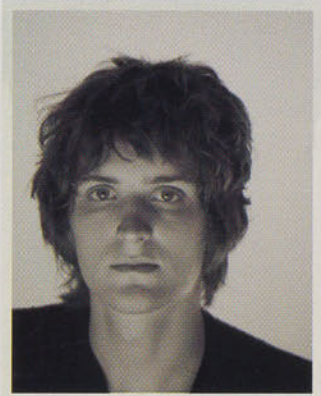


# <THE L MAGAZINE>

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## The Envy Issue: Young New Yorkers Who Are Better Than You

**ALSO:** Ariel Panero, RIP **AND** 33 Records To Watch Out For In 2011

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## INSIDE THE ARTIST STUDIO: NATSU IN GRAMERCY

BY BENJAMIN SUTTON

**When you're working on a new piece, do you start out with a specific idea or object in mind?**

With public and outdoor pieces, I like to visit the site and take inspiration from the space. But my work is very flexible, so if I can't see the space, I bring beads and wires. Beads are my basic raw material, like paints for a painter. I work more intuitively, and then once a piece is completed I can make associations and find ideas. But people can see anything in my work; I don't want them to read my concept first, I want them to see the piece and create connections.

**What's your concept for this new installation?**

I'm very interested in science and cosmology. I think

of my beads like the basic units of my art, like the way the whole universe is made up of molecules. The pattern of this new piece reminded me of the Milky Way, and "milky" comes from the Greek word for "breast milk," and the piece has the form of a woman's breast. I chose to use white beads that look "milky," and red beads because they evoke life, blood and nurturing. So I called the piece "Cradle-Island Universe."

*Natsu's new installation Cradle-Island Universe will be on view until January 23 at Black & White Project Space (483 Driggs Avenue, Williamsburg).*

READ THE FULL INTERVIEW AT [THEMAGAZINE.COM](http://THEMAGAZINE.COM)

## Inside the Artist's Studio: Natsu in Gramercy

by [Benjamin Sutton](#)

### When you're working on a new piece, do you start out with a specific idea or object in mind?

With public and outdoor pieces, I like to visit the site and take inspiration from the space. But my work is very flexible, so if I can't see the space, I bring beads and wires. Beads are my basic raw material, like paints for a painter. I work more intuitively, and then once a piece is completed I can make associations and find ideas. I want people to feel anything, not from reading my concept, just at first sight, maybe they feel something. Sometimes people see my work and think it's like spiderwebs. I believe that the web structure creates an infinite pattern. But people can see anything in my work, I want them to create connections.

### What's your concept for this new installation?

I'm very interested in science and cosmology. I think of my beads like the basic units of my art, like the way the whole universe is made up of molecules. The pattern of this new piece reminded me of the Milky Way.

Ancient Greeks called the Milky Way the "galaxias kuklos," or "milky circle" for its appearance in the sky. Greek myth describes the origin of the Milky Way as the goddess Hera is spilling her breast milk across the heavens to form a milky circle. In fact, the word "galaxy" comes from the Greek word for the Milky Way, which is derived from the words for mother's milk (gala) and circle (kuklos). The milky, circular bead sculpture is hanging in the air to embrace the universe as its birthplace or nest, its cocoon. And the red beads because they evoke life, blood and nurturing. So I called the piece "Cradle-Island Universe."

### Why did you choose to work with beads as your basic unit or material?

I don't remember ever deciding to use beads. My mother tells a story that when I was a very young child I always played with beads and necklaces, but I don't remember. I like using them for my work because their form is organic, but made out of plastic beads. So there's a tension between natural things and man-made things. Because the space at Black & White Project Space is concrete, I think the organic forms will be more vivid.

### Your work seems to have shifted from smaller sculptures to larger architectural pieces. Was that a conscious move on your part?

Yes. My earlier work was much smaller, but it was also focused inwards, on creating interior spaces. In my more recent pieces, like at the Dumbo Arts Festival [in 2008] and my new sculpture, it's about embracing and transforming the whole space.



*Natsu's new installation Cradle-Island Universe (above) will be on view until January 23 at [Black & White Project Space](#) (483 Driggs Avenue, Williamsburg).*